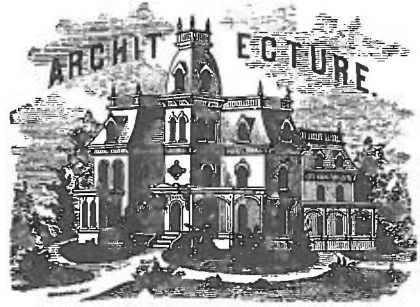


# A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine



## Ebenezer Dunton 1764?-1809

As a largely undeveloped frontier in the eighteenth century, Maine was on the periphery of the great events leading to the founding of the Republic. One of the state's most tangible links with the Revolution and George Washington's presidency is the estate of General Henry Knox in Thomaston. Knox, who commanded Washington's artillery and later served as the first Secretary of War, created "Montpelier", a large Federal style mansion, in what was little more than a wilderness (Figure 1). Although

the design for this house has often been attributed to Charles Bulfinch, documents show that Ebenezer Dunton was not only the principal builder but acted as the architect in transforming Knox's ideas into a great country estate.<sup>1</sup>

Ebenezer Dunton was born in Boston in about 1764, possibly the son of Thomas Dunton, a housewright. As late as 1790, by which time Ebenezer had come of age, the young builder was apparently still residing with his father. In 1793 Henry Jackson, General Knox's agent in Boston, hired Ebenezer Dunton and an older brother to construct Montpelier. Within a few months the elder brother was dismissed, leaving Ebenezer to supervise all building activities.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 1. Montpelier, Thomaston, c. 1850 daguerreotype view (Courtesy of Bureau of Parks and Recreation).

Although not a politician, Henry Knox was certainly a leading figure in post-Revolutionary America. His illustrious career began as a soldier who rose to the rank of Major General. After the war his close friend George Washington appointed him Secretary of War. General Knox's connection with Maine derived through his wife, Lucy Flucker, a granddaughter of General Samuel Waldo. General Waldo had been granted an extensive tract of land in Maine in 1740. Known as the "Waldo Patent", it was comprised of between 65 and 70 thousand acres. By 1793 Henry and Lucy Knox had acquired about four-fifths of this patent, either through inheritance or purchase, while the general served as administrator of his father-in-law's estate.<sup>3</sup> With this large landholding, the Knoxes decided to create a self-sufficient country estate not unlike that of many of their contemporaries. George Washington's "Mt. Vernon" and Thomas Jefferson's "Monticello" are among the most well-known examples. For the actual design of the house and grounds, however, inspiration was found closer to home in the summer residences outside Boston. Thus, the general turned to a local housewright.

General Knox had developed plans for his Thomaston residence by the spring of 1793.<sup>4</sup> The exact nature of these plans and who originated them, however, will probably never be known. It is entirely possible that Knox, like his good friend George Washington and his cabinet colleague Thomas Jefferson, prepared designs on his own for his country estate. Whatever the source, it was the general's intention to construct the house before the end of 1793. With Henry Jackson representing his interests in Boston and Captain Thomas Vose acting as his agent in Thomaston, the general directed a building campaign from Philadelphia. The impracticality of this arrangement soon eliminated any hope of construction beginning that year. In a July 23rd letter to Jackson, Captain Vose complained that the plans had not yet been received from Knox. Moreover, it is evident that no housewright had been selected, for Vose suggested a local man, Major Keith, to frame the house.<sup>5</sup> Jackson dutifully relayed Vose's concerns, but it was not until August 22nd that General Knox sent the "plans and elevations" to Jackson. These were not received until September 2nd, and by the middle of the month all were agreed that it would be better to delay construction until the next year.<sup>6</sup> Apparently, it was at this point that Jackson began to bring the project more under control.

Evidently that fall a decision was made to remodel an existing house for Knox and his family, who would come to Thomaston in the spring to take a more active role in the development of the estate. Jackson hired Ebenezer Dunton to prepare plans for an addition to the "Old House", and these plans survive as Knox transcribed them for his records. Dunton was also to travel to Thomaston to see that sufficient lumber was obtained for the frame of the

new house. Jackson reported to Knox that, "I am entreating with a good man to build the large house in the spring."<sup>7</sup> Payment for Dunton's plans and a trip "to the Eastward" is reflected in Knox's account book entry of September 29, 1793.<sup>8</sup>

General Knox must have met Dunton in the fall of that year when he conferred with Jackson in Boston. Still trying to push construction as rapidly as possible, Knox instructed Vose to select the site in preparation of "one of the Duntons" to come up and mark the boundary of the cellar and arrange for the storage of timber for the frame. In the same letter, Knox chided Vose for being unwilling to give up the house he occupied to be remodeled for the general and his family.<sup>9</sup>

It is during the winter of 1793-94 that correspondence between Jackson and Knox reveals additional information regarding Dunton's role in planning the design. In October, Jackson reported that he had conferred with Dunton about changing the "square room" to an oval one and that he, Dunton, will prepare plans.<sup>10</sup> This revised scheme was later forwarded to Knox with the comment that it looked odd "having the whole oval outside the square front."<sup>11</sup>

This exchange is important, for it demonstrates that what is considered the most unusual aspect of Montpelier as constructed — the oval room on axis with the hall — was not introduced until late 1793, and was Henry Knox's suggestion. In the Knox papers is a sketch of four floor plans for Montpelier which shows a T-shaped house with a square front and octagonal wings. This extraordinary scheme is dated, confusingly, "1794", but must be a representation of the square front Knox wanted changed to oval (Figure 2).<sup>12</sup> This is supported by an undated fragment of a measured drawing for the second floor plan showing a house with octagonal wings and an oval front (Figure 3).<sup>13</sup> Presumably this is Dunton's effort to translate Knox's ideas on to paper. Unfortunately, there is no record of how this scheme evolved to eliminate the octagonal wings, but it is likely they were sacrificed as a cost-cutting measure.

In any case, it was not until March, 1794, that Jackson acknowledged receipt of the "final" plans.<sup>14</sup> Work on various components of the house, however, had begun in Dunton's shop in late 1793. Doors, windows and moldings were fabricated in preparation for assembly on the site. On December 29th Jackson wrote that, "the Mr. Duntons are going very well. I furnish them with money from time to time to purchase the necessary materials. They are opening the inside work, doors and windows."<sup>15</sup> As late as March, 1794 Knox was still proposing alterations. A request to change the window design prompted a long response from Dunton on the added expense entailed in such a change. Moreover, Dunton opined that such a change would spoil the proportions of the design. Knox responded by deferring to his architect's judgement.<sup>16</sup>

A contract for framing the house was signed on

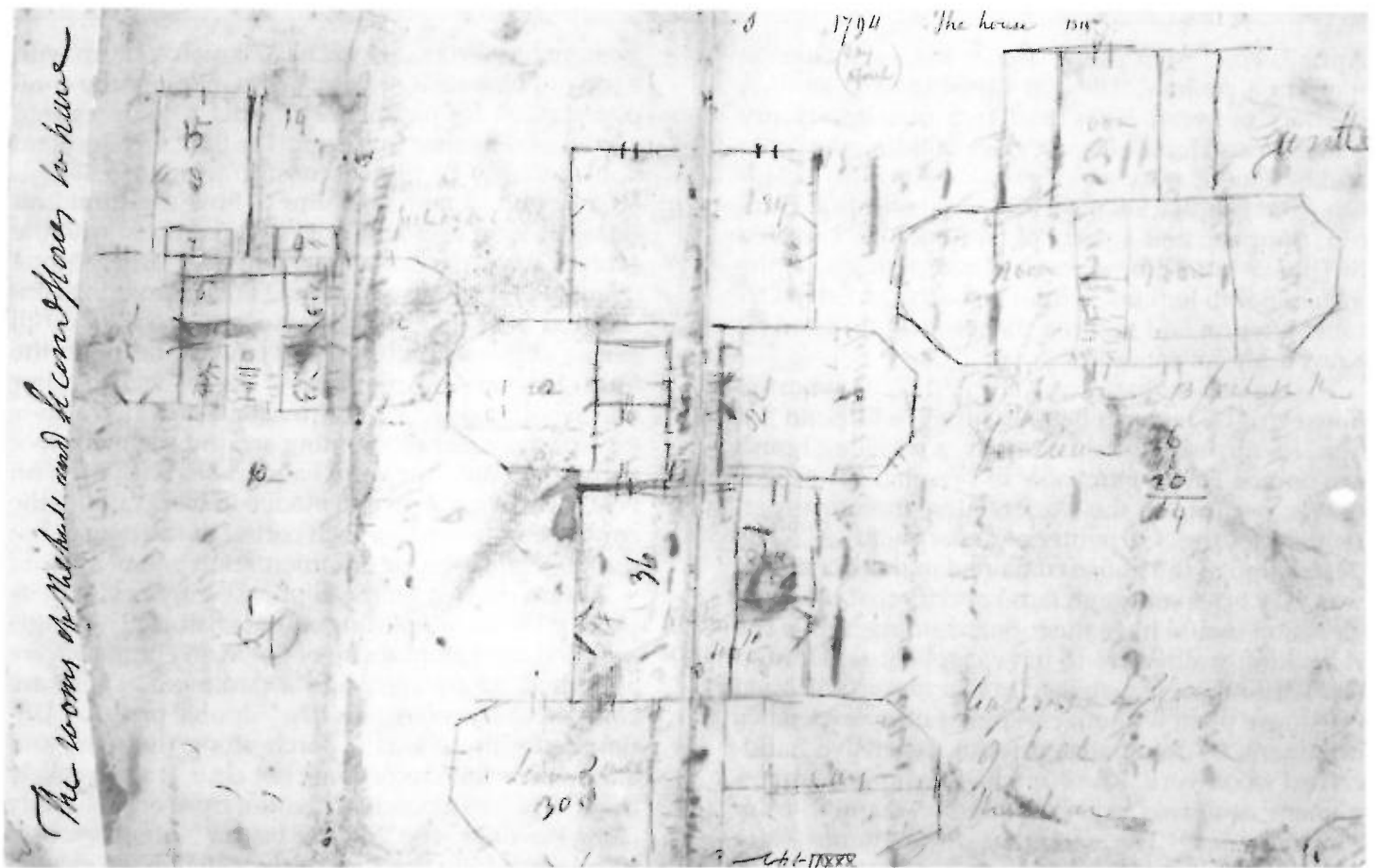


Figure 2. Sketch of preliminary floor plans for Montpelier, 1794(?), Top left to right: second story, first story, garret; Bottom: basement story (Courtesy of Massachusetts Historical Society).

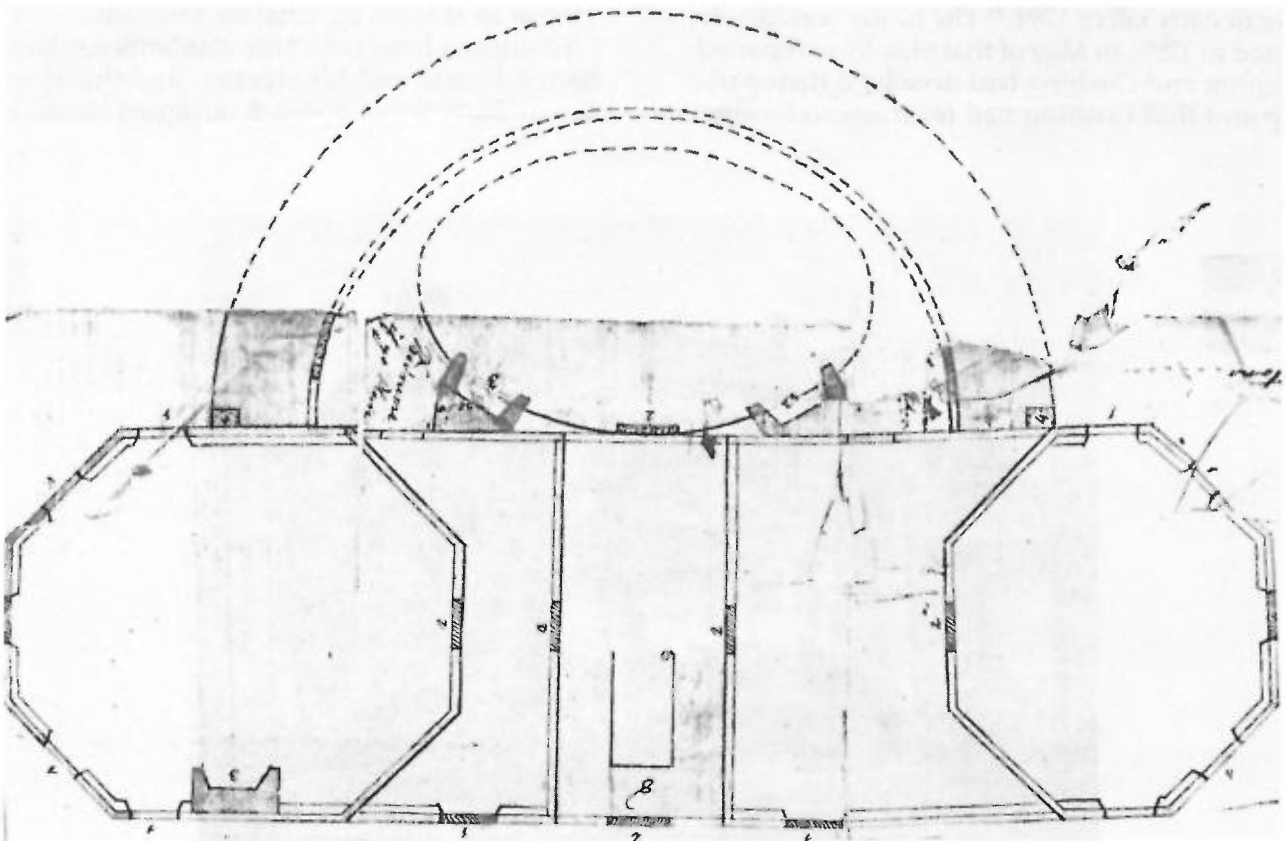


Figure 3. Fragment of early scheme for second floor with conjectural reconstruction, 1794? (Courtesy of Maine Historical Society).

April 7, 1794.<sup>17</sup> For this aspect of the work Dunton took on a partner, Tileston Cushing of Boston. A contract between Knox and two masons, Henry Simpson and James Hearsey, for building the cellar and basement story was signed on April 14, 1794.<sup>18</sup> On April 22nd Jackson was able to report that Dunton, Simpson and a party of workmen had arrived in Thomaston.<sup>19</sup> Ebenezer also brought his wife, the former Sarah Jenkins, whom he had married in October after he had secured the job to build General Knox's Maine estate.<sup>20</sup>

The agreement between Knox and the two Boston housewrights specified that, "they will build for him, he furnishing the materials, a dwelling house at Thomas Town, agreeably to the plan furnished, that is, perform all the work relative thereto appertaining to the Carpenter's department...." The description of the house contained in this document was very brief, although it did specify that the front elevation would have flush-board siding, while the remaining walls were to have clapboards. Dunton and Cushing were restricted in that they, "will build the house plain without carving or other expensive ornament."<sup>21</sup> As a substitute for expensive hand-carved woodwork, Knox purchased composition ornament and two polished marble mantels from Philadelphia.<sup>22</sup> The fact that these items were ordered from Philadelphia, then the seat of government, indicates the role of the client in the choice of interior decorative details.

Knox himself did not visit the site until the late summer or early fall of 1794.<sup>23</sup> The house was largely completed in 1795. In May of that year Vose reported that Dunton and Cushing had dissolved their partnership and that Cushing had returned to Boston.

Vose suggested that Knox have a man sent up with a copy of *Norman's Architecture* to measure the completed work for payment.<sup>24</sup> In July Knox prepared a letter of reference for Dunton as the "architect and housewright" of his Thomaston residence.<sup>25</sup>

Early photographs document how the front and sides of Montpelier appeared as constructed with the exception of the piazza which was largely gone (Figure 4). The house was quite unlike anything constructed in Maine before or since. It stood two full stories above its high brick basement. Between the four chimneys on the hipped roof was a monitor which both lighted the stairhall and provided a view toward the ocean. Extending around the main roof and on the monitor were balustrades with urns on posts. There were several modillion blocks under the cornice and quoins on each corner of the house, but the principal exterior ornamentation below the roof was concentrated on the elliptical center bay with its Doric pilasters supporting an entablature. The single panelled door and lunette of the main entrance were enframed by pilasters and a pediment. There are contemporary references to a "double piazza". Undoubtedly there was a porch along the rear, and although written records are not clear, it seems likely that there was a porch across the front and possibly along the sides. The "double piazza", however, may have referred to the roof deck or may have existed only around the oval.<sup>26</sup> This is suggested by the second floor plan fragment and by the likely source of Montpelier's basic design, the Joseph Barrell House in Boston by Charles Bulfinch.

Historians have noted the similarities between the Barrell House and Montpelier, and this has led to the attribution that Bulfinch designed Henry Knox's



Figure 4. Montpelier, c. 1870 view (Courtesy of Sally Hill).



house.<sup>27</sup> Built in 1792-93, the Barrell House was located in Somerville outside Boston. It can be credited with introducing the popular concept of having an oval in the center of the principal facade on axis to the staircase. Moreover, the Barrell House featured an oval "salon" on the first floor supporting a second story piazza which did not project beyond the plane of the story below.<sup>28</sup> A similar arrangement may have been planned at Montpelier. This is suggested by an exchange between Knox and Dunton in which the general inquired about the practicality of having a brick basement story extend out beneath the projecting piazza.<sup>29</sup> Had this been carried out, it would have strongly resembled the Barrell House design of a masonry first story supporting a second story piazza.

Another important similarity between Bulfinch's elevation drawing for the Joseph Barrell House and Montpelier is Knox's original intention of having two elaborately ornamented flanking buildings linked by connectors to the main house. These "flankers", which were built, were to be brick faced with stucco and were to have pilasters, cornices and pediments (Figure 5). The treatment of the actual connectors themselves is less clear, although they were to be decoratively linked to the piazza with cornices. Thus it seems possible that Knox and Dunton's early attempts at arriving at floor plans were resolved in late 1793 or early 1794 by one or both of them having had a chance to see the newly completed Barrell House. Any direct involvement by Bulfinch, however, seems very unlikely.

Virtually nothing survives to document the rear elevation, except for Dunton's description of the door as "tuscan". An 1855 survey map of the property, however, shows a veranda extending the full length of the rear with staircases at either end.<sup>30</sup> Very little documentation survives concerning the interior. The plan for the first floor was sketched on the back of a scrap of wallpaper and is assumed to be accurate. An early view of the parlor, drawn by Mrs. C. A. Weston, may give an authentic representation of that room.<sup>31</sup> One scholar, Carolyn Parsons, has documented from surviving fragments a selection of wallpapers which would have embellished the interior.<sup>32</sup> In the same study Ms. Parsons has compiled a record of the grounds of the estate with its extensive outbuildings.

Although Dunton's agreement to construct the house was completed in 1795, the Boston housewright remained for another year to work on a variety of projects for General Knox. As the principal architect for Montpelier, Dunton's work ranged from small jobs in the house, principally joinery, to the design and construction of numerous support structures. The latter included an ice house, a greenhouse, a grainery, a poultry house, and fences. In order to save money the brick servants' quarters and stable were left unornamented.<sup>33</sup>

Included in Dunton's work for the general was the design and possibly construction of two houses, each

two stories high and measuring 38 by 30 feet. One was intended as a "permanent farmhouse". Dunton also constructed a store, probably near the Knox Wharf on Wadsworth Street, the original commercial center of the settlement.<sup>34</sup> Captain Vose's house was located there, and Dunton's renovations to that structure, which were proposed in 1793, were carried out for Henry Knox's trusted agent in 1794.<sup>35</sup> Knox's policy of allowing people to build on his land with the hope of eventually acquiring title to the property they improved makes it difficult to identify the original occupants of early buildings. Dunton himself occupied a house he may have built, but which he had to share with a blacksmith named Parsons and his family. In May, 1796 Dunton pleaded with the general to find another house for the Parsons, stating, "The house is not finished and the masons have not begun to plaster. It is not convenient for two families which makes it very disagreeable to me and my wife to have another family here."<sup>36</sup>

General Knox's primary interest was to promote the settlement at Thomaston in order that his summer home would not exist in isolation. In this sense, Knox's project was more like the great landed estates of the south than the suburban homes of Boston. The general contributed to the construction of a Congregational Meeting House by hiring Ebenezer Dunton to prepare plans and an estimate of the timber required. This was done in 1795, the year the meetinghouse was erected.<sup>37</sup> This structure was remodelled several times early in the nineteenth century and was razed about 1960. The only record of its original appearance derives from the following account by local historian Cyrus Eaton:

The building appears to have been 50 feet in width and probably about the same in length; exclusive of two projecting wings or porches in front, between which was an open court leading to the main entrance into the body of the building below, and covered over by an arch or platform extending from wing to wing, upon which was erected a belfry surmounted by a tall and elegant steeple.<sup>38</sup>

Eaton's description is of a rather unconventional meeting house, but there is too little information for making an interpretation regarding the design of the church.

Ebenezer Dunton left Thomaston in the fall of 1796. In October he purchased half a house on Prince Street in Boston. On November 20th he wrote to Knox indicating a willingness to work for the general again, and that he was presently engaged by Captain Michael Lincoln.<sup>39</sup> Although Dunton sold the house a year later, he was still listed in the Boston Directory of 1798. By 1800 there is no record of his residence in either Boston or Maine.

We will never know the complete story of why Ebenezer Dunton left Boston. What we do know must have scandalized Thomaston, for Cyrus Eaton provided this surprising account in 1855:

E. Dunton... in consequence of some trouble

or misunderstanding between himself and his wife, sold out, and embarked for the West Indies or South America, where he was said to have married a Spanish or Creole lady, and never returned. His deserted wife set up a milliner's shop here, said to be the first in the place.<sup>40</sup>

This account is supported by the report in a Boston newspaper of Dunton's death in Demerary (British Guyana) in 1809.<sup>41</sup> There was an active trade in building materials to Demerary at that time, which may explain his presence there.<sup>42</sup>

Sarah Dunton appears to have prospered quite well without Ebenezer, for she built her own house in Thomaston and, upon her death in 1812, left an estate valued at over \$5,000. Deed transactions before her husband's death discretely refer to her as a "widow woman".<sup>43</sup>

General Knox died before both Duntons in 1806. His plans for developing Thomaston were not matched by his business acumen, and his estate was gradually dissipated. By the 1860s his mansion was derelict and abandoned. Its destruction in 1871 to make way for the Knox and Lincoln Railroad was merely the coup de grace. The design for the house survives at another location in Thomaston in the faithful reproduction of 1929-30, where it stands as a memorial to the ambition of Henry Knox and the craftsmanship of Ebenezer Dunton.

Roger G. Reed  
July, 1987

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The first written attribution that Bulfinch was the architect is *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic* by Fiske Kimball, New York, 1922, p. 165. Bulfinch's supposed involvement was elaborated on in *The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch* by Harold Kirker, Cambridge, 1969, pp. 93-100. Other scholars have deferred to his judgement, although Kirker himself did not include Montpelier among Bulfinch's Maine work in a more recent article, "Charles Bulfinch, 1763-1844" by Harold Kirker, *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Maine*, Vol. II, No. 7, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, May, 1985.

<sup>2</sup> Vital statistics for Boston and environs in the 18th century are incomplete. Apparently, no record has survived documenting when Ebenezer or his brother were born. There is a birth record for Thomas Dunton, born in 1723, the son of Ebenezer and Sarah Dunton. Thomas Dunton is listed in the 1789 Boston directory as a housewright, and in the 1790 census with three free white males over 16 years, three free white males under 16 years, and three free white females. He is also recorded as a property owner in 1791 and 1792. Only Ebenezer appears in the 1798 directory, and no Dunton is listed in the census for 1800 or 1810.

Evidently, Thomas Dunton died or left Boston between 1792 and 1798. A letter in the Knox Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society documents that Ebenezer was initially working on Montpelier with an elder brother (Jackson to Knox, March 3, 1794). Boston city records do list a George Dunton, who was married to Francis Revere on October 19, 1788.

Harold Kirker refers to a younger brother William who worked with Ebenezer. This, however, appears to be a mistake taken from an article on Thomaston architecture, which is also cited by Kirker: "The Architecture of Thomaston, Maine" by Samuel M. Green, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, December, 1951, Vol. 10, pp. 24-25. I have found no reference to William Dunton in primary records.

<sup>3</sup> "Montpelier the Home of General Henry Knox" by James B. Vickery, *Maine Historical Society Quarterly*, Fall, 1986, Vol. 26, No. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Knox to Vose, April 25, 1793, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. Apparently Knox's original intention was to have a brick house.

<sup>5</sup> Jackson to Knox, August 4, 1793, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>6</sup> Knox to Jackson, August 22, 1793; Knox to Jackson, August 31, 1793; Jackson to Knox, September 2, 1793; Knox to Vose, September 4, 1793; Jackson to Knox, September 15, 1793; Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>7</sup> Jackson to Knox, September 15, 1793; Jackson to Knox, September 26, 1793; Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. The transcription of the plans to remodel the "Old House" are in the Knox Papers at the Maine Historical Society, "Outline of floor plan for an addition to the old house at St. Georges sent to Capt. Vose 3 September, 1793."

<sup>8</sup> Account Book, entry dated September 29, 1793, Knox Papers, Maine Historical Society.

<sup>9</sup> Knox to Vose, October 18, 1793; Knox to Vose, October 20, 1793; Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>10</sup> Jackson to Knox, October 26, 1793, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>11</sup> Jackson to Knox, November 3, 1793, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>12</sup> Sketch plan of "The house", dated 1794, Knox Papers, Vol. 36, No. 142, p. 4, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>13</sup> Fragment of second floor plan, undated, located in a miscellaneous folder in the Knox Papers, Maine Historical Society.

<sup>14</sup> Jackson to Knox, March 3, 1794, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>15</sup> Jackson to Knox, December 29, 1793; Jackson to Knox, March 3, 1794; Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>16</sup> Dunton to Knox, April 3, 1794; Knox to Dunton, April 14, 1794; Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. All architects must sympathize with Dunton's frustrations when Knox wrote on April 14, 1794, "General Jackson last fall said you had decided to have the front of the basement story of brick. I want that mode which will be most durable and at the same time the cheapest."

<sup>17</sup> Contract between Henry Knox and Ebenezer Dunton and Tileston Cushing, April 7, 1794, Knox Papers, Maine Historical Society. Tileston Cushing (1767-1847) later settled in Bath and built the Lincoln County Court House in Wiscasset in 1824.

<sup>18</sup> Contract between Henry Knox and Henry Simpson and James Hearsey, April 17, 1794, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>19</sup> Jackson to Knox, April 22, 1794, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>20</sup> *A Volume of Records Relating to the Early History of Boston Containing Boston Marriages from 1752-1809*, Boston, 1903, p. 116.

<sup>21</sup> Contract between Knox and Dunton and Cushing, *op. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> Bills for materials purchased from William Zane, dated Philadelphia, November 4, 1794, and John Miller, dated Philadelphia, November 14, 1794, Knox Papers, Maine Historical Society.

<sup>23</sup> Vose to Knox, December 20, 1794, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.





Figure 5. Montpelier with servants wing, c. 1870 view (MHPC).

<sup>24</sup> Vose to Knox, May 28, 1795, Knox Papers, Maine Historical Society.

<sup>25</sup> Knox to Dunton, July 25, 1795, Knox Papers, Maine Historical Society.

<sup>26</sup> There are several early references to the porches, which seem to have made an impression on visitors to the house. In a letter of March 4, 1796, Knox intrusts Dunton to have the rooms "in the lower piazza heretofore directed finished" and the "roof of the upper piazza made tight", Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. The context of this letter, however, concerns the flanking wings and outbuildings, not the main house, which, presumably, was substantially finished by then. In August, 1796, the Rev. Paul Coffin visited Montpelier and wrote, "The General's house with double piazzas round the whole of it exceeds all I have seen." Yet in December, 1796, another visitor, Alexander Baring, wrote, "His house is altogether 120 by 40, including the front piazzas on each side of the body of the building." Both references cited in "Bordering on Magnificence: Urban Domestic Planning in the Maine Woods" by Carolyn Parsons, unpublished manuscript, pp. 9-10. The Rev. Coffin may have been referring to the double piazzas on the flanking wings, rather than the whole house. The earliest photographs show only remnants of a porch on the oval portion of the front of the house. Clearly, a more elaborate arrangement, if it did exist, did not survive by 1850.

<sup>27</sup> See note #1.

<sup>28</sup> Kirker, *op. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> "Instructions to the house builder", Knox to Vose, March 10, 1794, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>30</sup> Dunton to Knox, April 3, 1794, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society; Knox County Registry of Deeds, Vol. 24, p. 362.

<sup>31</sup> The original wallpaper scrap was undated and unsigned. It has since been lost, but a photograph of it is in the archives of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. The undated interior sketch was printed in the *Magazine of American History*, New York, August, 1886. According to the *Ozone*, a Sharon, Massachusetts, newspaper of August 28, 1886, Mrs. Weston grew up in Montpelier and made this drawing from memory.

<sup>32</sup> "Bordering on Magnificence: Urban Domestic Planning in the Maine Woods" by Carolyn Parsons, unpublished manuscript.

<sup>33</sup> "Account of Small Jobs", Ebenezer Dunton, November, 1795; Dunton to Knox, January 16, 1796; Knox to Dunton, February 1, 1796; Knox to Dunton, March 4, 1796; Knox to Dunton, April 20, 1796; Dunton to Knox, May 21, 1796; Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>34</sup> Knox to Dunton, March 4, 1796; Knox to Dunton, April 20, 1796; Dunton to Knox, May 21, 1796; Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>35</sup> Jackson to Knox, March 27, 1794, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

<sup>36</sup> Dunton to Knox, May 16, 1796, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. Cyrus Eaton, the principal nineteenth century historian of Thomaston, is an important source of information for this period. Eaton mentions that Dunton built a house for himself, which was later taken over by Captain Vose. *History of Thomaston, Rockland and South Thomaston*, by Cyrus Eaton, Hallowell, 1865, Vol. I, p. 214. Eaton also refers to Dunton as the "architect" of Montpelier. *History*, Vol. I, p. 27. An early photograph of Wadsworth Street has been published as Plate 7, *Tall Ships, White Houses, and Elms, Thomaston, Maine, 1870-1900*, Thomaston Historical Society, Rockland, 1976.

- <sup>37</sup> "Account of Small Jobs", Ebenezer Dunton, November, 1795, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
- <sup>38</sup> Eaton, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-203.
- <sup>39</sup> Dunton to Knox, November 20, 1796, Knox Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society. Suffolk County Registry of Deeds, Vol. 184, p. 166 and Vol. 186, p. 216.
- <sup>40</sup> Eaton, *op. cit.*, p. 214.
- <sup>41</sup> *Columbian Centennial*, June 3, 1809.
- <sup>42</sup> In 1799 an Englishman, Henry Bolingbroke, journeyed to Demerary and made the following observations on the architecture and the building trades of Stabrock (Georgetown): "...wooden houses, with colonaded porticoes, and balconies shaded by a projecting roof, are orderly arranged between spacious intervals in three parallel lines." (p. 16); "The frames and shingles... are the produce of the adjacent forests. Boards, planks clapboards, for closing in, are imported from America." (p. 33); "The labor of mechanics is with us extravagantly dear. A negro carpenter, or mason, earns from five to ten shillings a day, according to his skill." (p. 34); "The principal material used is North-American lumber, of which the market value fluctuates much...." (p. 34). All citations from *A Voyage to the Demerary containing a statistical account of the settlement there, and of those on the Essequibe, the Berbice, and other contiguous rivers of Guyana* by Henry Bolingbroke, London, 1809. It is clear from Bolingbroke's account that American housing materials and Dunton's skills would have been in great demand at the time.
- <sup>43</sup> Lincoln County Probate Records, Vol. 17, pp. 12-20, 284-85; Knox County Registry of Deeds. Vol. 17, p. 513, Vol. 14, p. 188.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank Sheila McDonald, Historian for the Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Maine Department of Conservation, for her help in interpreting the scattered and complex documents relating to the original Montpelier. Ms. McDonald is the authority on the reconstructed Montpelier, which is now owned by the State of Maine.

## LIST OF KNOWN COMMISSIONS IN MAINE BY EBENEZER DUNTON

Addition to the "Old House" for Henry Knox, Thomaston, 1793-94, Destroyed.  
 "Montpelier", Estate of Henry Knox, Thomaston, 1793-96, Destroyed.  
 Congregational Meeting House, Thomaston, 1795, Destroyed.  
 House for Ebenezer Dunton, Thomaston, 1795-96, Destroyed.  
 Store for Henry Knox, Thomaston, 1795-96, Destroyed.

Volume IV, Number 14, 1987  
 Published by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
 55 Capitol Street, Augusta, Maine 04333  
 Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Editor  
 Roger G. Reed, Associate Editor

*This publication has been financed in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.*